

*Delivers Speech Promoting Safety of Louisiana Seafood*

July 1, 2010

WASHINGTON, DC — Today, U.S. Congressman Charlie Melancon (LA-03) gave a speech on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives to raise public awareness that Louisiana seafood on the market is still safe to consume, despite the oil spill in the Gulf. The seafood industry is a major sector of Louisiana's economy, providing thousands of jobs and supporting hundreds of small businesses in the state. Click [here](#) to view the speech.

**"While the news coverage of the BP oil spill is constantly reminding us that we are facing the largest environmental disaster in our nation's history, it is imperative that we prevent another disaster from developing: The death of the Louisiana Seafood Industry,"**

Congressman Melancon said.

**"I come to the floor today to let you know that Louisiana Seafood on the market is safe to eat."**

Congressman Melancon continued, **"Some areas of our coastline are now closed to fishing. These closures are necessary and should underscore our steadfast commitment to consumer safety. But, the world must know that approximately 40 percent of our oyster areas are open for harvesting and 70 percent of our coast remains open to commercial and recreational fishing."**

In conclusion, Congressman Melancon said, **"When you choose Louisiana Seafood, you're supporting the traditions, culture and environment that have sustained the people of Louisiana and fed the nation for centuries."**

The full text of Congressman Melancon's speech as prepared for delivery is below.

Congressman Melancon has been an advocate in Congress for Louisiana's fishermen and seafood industry impacted by the oil spill in the Gulf. In May, Congressman Melancon secured a fisheries disaster declaration from the federal government, paving the way for financial assistance for fishermen and small businesses in the seafood industry. Melancon began [calling for the fisheries assistance in April](#), when he told the head of NOAA's Fisheries Service and the Secretary of Commerce that the oil intrusion resulting from the Deepwater Horizon oil rig disaster would likely damage the fragile habitats on which Louisiana's fishermen, oystermen, and shrimpers depend.

Congressman Melancon represents in Congress the areas of coastal Louisiana most directly affected by the oil leak, including Plaquemines, St. Bernard, Terrebonne, Lafourche, St. Mary and southern Jefferson Parishes. The Deepwater Horizon platform was located 50 miles off the coast of Louisiana's Third Congressional District.

Congressman Melancon's Remarks on the Floor of the U.S. House of Representatives in Support of Louisiana Seafood

July 1, 2010

*Mr. Speaker,*

*I rise today on behalf of thousands of Louisiana families that have worked tirelessly in our seafood industry to deliver shrimp, oysters, crabs and countless varieties of fish to restaurants and markets across the country.*

*While the news coverage of the BP oil spill is constantly reminding us that we are facing the largest environmental disaster in our nation's history, it is imperative that we prevent another disaster from developing: The death of the Louisiana Seafood Industry.*

*I come to the floor today to let you know that Louisiana Seafood on the market is safe to eat. There is daily testing – as never before - of seafood catches by local, state and federal experts and scientists.*

*To aide in this oversight, Congressman Boyd of Florida and I sent a letter to the President requesting that a Seafood Safety Taskforce be assembled. Their mission would be to further assure the safety and wholesomeness of Gulf of Mexico commercial seafood products harvested from Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill affected areas.*

*Some areas of our coastline are now closed to fishing. These closures are necessary and should underscore our steadfast commitment to consumer safety. But, the world must know that approximately 40 percent of our oyster areas are open for harvesting and 70 percent of our coast remains open to commercial and recreational fishing.*

*I implore you, please, help our fishermen by buying Louisiana Seafood. Many of them fish and work with several species, so buying all Louisiana seafood is important. Also, don't forget that 100 percent of crawfish, alligator and catfish are safe because they are raised in unaffected freshwater habitats.*

*When you choose Louisiana Seafood, you're supporting the traditions, culture and environment that have sustained the people of Louisiana and fed the nation for centuries.*

*Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I yield back the balance of my time.*

**###**